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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, ID
SUBJECT: THE SAWITO TRIAL GENERATES MORE HEAT THAN LIGHT

REF: JAKARTA 4314

1. SUMMARY: THE TRIAL OF SAWITO KARTOWIBOWO ON CHARGES OF PLOTTING TO OVERTHROW PRESIDENT SUHARTO CONTINUED APRIL 10 WITH A LENGTHY AND HEATED ARGUMENT BETWEEN THE PROSECUTOR AND DEFENSE COUNSEL OVER SAWITO'S REQUEST FOR TESTIMONY FROM THE SIGNATORIES OF HIS FAMOUS PAPER CRITICIZING SUHARTO. THE COURT RULED THAT THE SIGNATORIES, FORMER VICE PRESIDENT HATTA AND FOUR RELIGIOUS LEADERS, NEED NOT TESTIFY, BUT RECESSED FOR ANOTHER WEEK TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO ALLOWING HATTA TO BE A WITNESS. NO NEW TESTIMONY WAS PRESENTED AT THE SESSION. SAWITO HAS ALSO ASKED FOR TESTIMONY FROM THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS, NONE OF WHOM ARE EXPECTED TO APPEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. NOT A SINGLE WITNESS WAS HEARD WHEN THE CONSPIRACY TRIAL OF SAWITO KARTOWIBOWO RESUMED APRIL 10 IN CENTRAL
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JAKARTA STATE COURT. INSTEAD, A HEATED ARGUMENT OVER SAWITO'S RIGHT TO CALL ADDITIONAL WITNESSES FILLED THE TWO-HOUR SESSION, WITH THE DEFESNE REPEATING THEIR DEMAND THAT THE SIGNATORIES TO SAWITO'S "TOWARD SALVATION" DOCUMENT BE BE PUT ON THE STAND AND THE PROSECUTION ARGUING THAT ENOUGH EVIDENCE HAD ALREADY BEEN HEARD. THE SIGNATORIES INCLUDE FORMER VICE PRESIDENT MOHAMMED HATTA, CHAIRMAN OF

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THE INDONESIAN ULEMAS COUNCIL DR. HAMKA, CHAIRMAN OF THE INDONESIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES DR. T. B. SIMATUPANG, CARDINAL DARMOYUWONO, AND FORMER POLICE CHIEF SUKANTO, A LEADER IN THE MYSTICAL MOVEMENT.

3. DEFENSE COUNSEL YAP THIAM HIEN MAINTAINED THAT THE TESTIMONY OF THE FIVE SIGNATORIES WAS MOST IMPORTANT IN GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SAWITO AFFAIR. HE ADMITTED THAT HATTA'S PRESENCE IN COURT MIGHT RISK HIS REPUTATION AS A PROCLAMATOR OF THE REPUBLIC AND AN INDEPENDENCE FIGHTER, BUT ASSERTED THAT HATTA SHOULD TESTIFY TO DEFEND HIS POSITION PERSONALLY.

4. THE PROSECUTOR ARGUED THAT THE TESTIMONY OF THE FIVE SIGNATORIES WAS NOT NECESSARY, SINCE A NUMBER OF OTHER WITNESSES HAD ALREADY GIVEN SUFFICIENT INFORMATION IN THE CASE. AFTER A BRIEF RECESS TO CONSIDER THE ARGUMENTS, THE JUDGES AGREED WITH THE PROSECUTION'S POSITION, NOTING THAT THE COURT HAS THE LEGAL RIGHT TO REFUSE TO HEAR FURTHER WITNESSES.

5. YAP WAS REPORTEDLY INFURIATED BY THE COURT'S RULING, AND THE SESSION WAS RECESSED FOR ANOTHER WEEK TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF HATTA'S TESTIFYING. SAWITO,MEANWHILE, ASKED THAT A NEW LIST OF WITNESSES (SOME OF WHOM HAD BEEN MENTIONED EARLIER) BE CALLED, INCLUDING PRESIDENT SUHARTO, HIS SON SIGIT SUHARTO,
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VICE PRESIDENT ADAM MALIK, ATTORNEY GENERAL ALI SAID, STATE INTELLIGENCE BOARD (BAKIN) CHIEF YOGA SUGAMA, MINISTER OF INFORMATION ALI MURTOPO AND FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL SUGIHARTO.

6. COMMENT: THERE WAS NEVER MUCH HOPE THAT THE FOUR RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO SIGNED SAWITO'S "TOWARD SALVATION" DOCUMENT CRITICIZING THE SUHARTO REGIME WOULD BE ALLOWED OR WOULD EVEN WISH TO TESTIFY, AND THERE IS NONE WHATEVER THAT THOSE ON SAWITO'S LATEST LIST WHICH INCLUDES THE PRESIDENT WILL APPEAR IN COURT. HATTA WOULD SEEM TO BE A CENTRAL FIGURE IN THE CASE AND AN IMPORTANT WITNESS, BUT WE DOUBT THAT HE WILL APPEAR IN COURT TO REITERATE HIS PREVIOUS PRIVATE CRITICISMS OF SUHARTO'S ADMINISTRATION; AS THE DEFENSE SEEMS TO DESIRE.
MASTERS

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